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Rusk Says Contacts Going On

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WASHINGTON — In a seeming reversal of his position of six days ago, Secretary of State Dean Rusk said Wednesday that contacts with the "other side" in the Viet Nam war are going on "regularly, every week" in an effort to get negotiations started and the fighting stopped.

Speaking specifically of the U.S. bombing raids against North Viet Nam, the secretary told some 1,000 members of the White House Conference on the International Co-Operation Year here that, despite the continuing contacts, the "other side" has "been unwilling to give an answer" as to what its next move would be if the bombing ceased.

AT A PRESS conference in the State Department last week, Rusk refused to either confirm or deny that the U.S. still maintains regular contact with the North Viet Nam Communist government on the grounds that a "yes" would set off a worldwide hunt for the contact points and a negative reply would mean a frozen position on the part of the U.S.

Rusk challenged Peking and

Hanoi Wednesday to say publicly or any other way what steps they would take if the U.S. stopped its bombing missions, but his obvious attitude was that he expected the usual silence.

There was pleased applause from the basically critical audience when Rusk added that he was "not excluding the possibility of stopping the bombing as a step toward peace." But he has reiterated that position scores of times in the past six months.

WELL-INFORMED U. S. officials later insisted that Rusk's statement did not mean the U.S. was now giving any serious thought to a pause in the air attacks against North Viet Nam without getting some advance word of North Viet Nam's willingness to reciprocate in kind.

According to Rusk, Hanoi must first agree to call back one or more of the estimated nine regiments (about 2,000 troops in each) it now has fighting in South Viet Nam.

Rusk sharply repeated that when the U.S. ordered a five-day moratorium in its bombing raids last May the response from the three big Communist capitals — Peking, Hanoi and Moscow — was either silence or insults.

"WE ARE regularly in touch with those who can decide what happens if we stop bombing," he said, "and it should be clear that the problem is not one of contact."

Speaking without a text, Rusk was at his rhetorical best before the somewhat belligerent audience of intellectuals at the three-day conference, which ended Wednesday.

Rusk succeeded in taming many of the high-powered Tigers — more than 2,000 leaders in international affairs fields — with a rare display of eloquence, quick thinking and sophisticated charm. He received a sounding ovation at the conclusion of his remarks and regular observers of the secretary in ac-

tion agreed that he put most spectacular show years.

RUSK SAID the U.S.

always be found "one step ahead, not one-half step behind" in the search for peace, but that the Communists are determined to impose a settlement in South Viet Nam by force.

"Tens of thousands of infiltrators have been sent to impose a solution . . . and if you wish to deny this, you will find yourself out of date. The other side is not denying it," he said.

While not every quarrel in the world is this country's problem, he said, "in South Viet Nam we have a commitment and . . . there are capitals that could make a tragic miscalculation if they became convinced that American commitment will not be met."

RUSK SPENT almost 40 minutes parrying pointed questions from the floor. The queries expressed obvious disenchantment with the administration's policies on myriad matters. Among them:

— The Central Intelligence Agency neither makes policy or acts without the knowledge of high administration officials.

Rusk responded that the CIA acts at all times with the full knowledge of administration officials who ought to know what it is doing and that in a world where there is "a tough struggle going on in the back alleys the CIA acts with a good deal of gallantry and confidence."

On disarmament, one of the main topics of the conference, Rusk pointed out that "this is a problem of confidence, fear and suspicion." The Russians, he said, refuse to allow nuclear test-ban inspections and therefore the U.S. must make every effort to know what they are doing.

Can those who oppose the U.S. bombings and other aspects of the war be considered as contributing to the nation's moral standing?

Rusk said "of course we know the difference between disloyalty and dissent." Nevertheless he said "the Communist apparatus is busy in this country — I know it is."

The conference also heard reports from its 22 committees and submitted them for White House study.